

Know Your Numbers: The Formula for Healthy Sleep

According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), sleep deficiency is linked to many chronic health issues, including: high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, stroke, obesity and depression. Sleep deficiency is also linked to a higher chance of injury in adults, teens and children.¹²³

Lack of sleep has the potential to lower our level of Warfighter readiness, hinder force health protection and decrease our mission success. The more we know, the better prepared we can be to fight and win at home and ashore, both on and off the battlefield.



U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Ian Kinkead

Sleep and Blood Pressure²

If you sleep less than 6 hours within a 24-hour period, you have an increased risk of high blood pressure. It is thought that sleep helps your blood regulate stress hormones and helps your nervous system remain healthy. Over time, a lack of sleep could hurt your body's ability to regulate stress hormones, leading to high blood pressure, one of the leading risks for heart disease and stroke.

What is normal?

Less than 120/80 mm Hg (millimeters of mercury)

Lack of Sleep and Blood Glucose Levels^{3,4,5}

Sleep longer to lower your blood glucose levels. Increased glucose levels caused by insufficient sleep is believed to be one of the reasons for weight gain and diabetes risk.

What is a normal range?

70-130 mg/dL (milligrams per deciliter) is considered a healthy range 1-2 hours after a meal. However, 70-99 mg/dL is considered a healthy range when fasting.

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in the United States, about 1 in 3 adults report not getting the right amount sleep or rest every day.

How much is enough sleep?

It is recommended that adults 18 years and older get at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep a day.

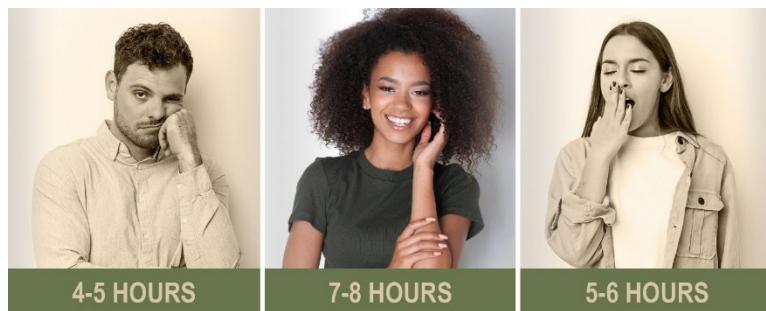


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What Can I Do to Get Better Sleep?^{1,2}

- Be consistent with bedtime, including weekends.
- Keep the bedroom quiet, dark, relaxing and at a comfortable temperature.
- Be sure to remove electronic devices from the bedroom.
- Avoid artificial light, especially within a few hours of bedtime.
- Avoid large meals, caffeine and alcohol before bedtime.
- Get enough natural light, especially earlier in the day. Try going for a lunchtime walk.
- Do physical activity during the day. Try not to exercise within a few hours of bedtime.

References

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